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Approved For Release 2005/06/01 : CIA-RDP79T00429A000300010033-0

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DCI Briefing

8 January 1963

CUBA

I. The Soviet military presence continues to be substantial despite the withdrawal of all strategic missiles and jet bombers known to have been in Cuba.

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about 17,000 Soviet military personnel remain.

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1. [redacted] more than 5,000 Soviets--probably associated with the strategic missiles and bombers--have left the island since November.

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B. [REDACTED] continuing construction

of permanent facilities at the four major Soviet armored group encampments in Cuba, where an estimated 5,000 Soviet troops now are located.

C. There has been no significant recent change in the status of the three coastal defense cruise-missile sites and related installations, or in the Soviet-operated air defense system, which includes 24 SAM sites.

1. [REDACTED] revealed that

one SAM site has been moved from its former location in northern Camaguey Province to a new spot in the center of the province.

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F. The display of surface-to-air and cruise missiles in the 2 January parade in Havana, together with Castro's reference in his speech

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to a Cuban unit in the parade as "the first ground rocket training unit," imply that Cuba will keep and eventually operate these weapons systems.

II. Substantial Soviet bloc shipping to Cuba continues as part of Moscow's effort to shore up the Castro regime.

A. Arrivals currently average about one ship a day, considerably below the rate at the height of the military buildup last summer, but comparable to the first half of 1962.

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D. We expect increased use of Soviet bloc ships on the Cuban run this year in order to circumvent US efforts to curtail Western shipping to Cuba.

[Redacted]

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2. If US restrictions are successful, the USSR probably will charter Western ships for runs to other areas, and divert as much of its own fleet to the Cuban trade as necessary.

III. Neither the Castro regime's goals nor its methods have changed significantly since the missile crisis.

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A.

[Redacted]

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ever since the crisis Castro has been taking a long, hard look at his regime's policies and possibly even the direction of his revolution; this was suggested by his absence from the public limelight during November and December. [Redacted]

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1. But despite Castro's chagrin over the removal of the missiles, there is no evidence that he will break his economic lifeline to Moscow or will side openly with Peiping in the Sino-Soviet dispute.

B. Castro's 2 January speech confirmed his regime's continuing hatred for the US and its determination to foment Communist revolutions elsewhere in Latin America.

1. He singled out Venezuela, where oil installations were sabotaged in late October and early November, presumably on direct orders from Havana, as being one example of a Latin American country showing real "revolutionary solidarity."

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C. Internally Castro's position remains secure;  
there are some indications [redacted]

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[redacted] that

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Cuba's "new" Communists are in the ascendancy,  
but no major purge of the Moscow-oriented  
"old" Communists seems likely.

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## DIRECT SOVIET CIVIL AIR ROUTE TO CUBA

I. A Soviet TU-114 turboprop transport made the first regularly scheduled flight from Moscow to Havana via Murmansk on 7 January.

A. The flight opens the first Soviet air route into the Western hemisphere and is billed by Moscow as the "world's longest regular nonstop air service."

1. The USSR advised the US on 17 December that such a route would be inaugurated and a test run was made in late December.
2. A roundtrip flight is now scheduled to be flown once a week rather than twice as announced previously.

B. By flying nonstop from the northern USSR, the Soviets are avoiding the problem of obtaining overflight and landing rights from Western countries.

1. Moscow has had increasing difficulties in acquiring such rights since the outbreak of the Cuban crisis.
2. The new route goes north from Moscow to Murmansk for refueling and from there direct to Havana--a total distance of more than 6,500 miles.

3. The route does not pass through the air-space of Western countries, but the Soviets have requested navigational and weather aids from Norway, Iceland, Canada, the UK, and the US.
- C. Although frequently alleged to be an undependable aircraft, we believe the TU-114 is fully capable of regular service on the Moscow-Havana route.
  1. Maintenance difficulties are common to the TU-114, however, and the Soviets have announced they are assigning five aircraft to the Cuban route to assure the schedule is carried out.
  2. Previously the only regularly scheduled TU-114 service was on a route connecting Moscow and Khabarovsk in the Soviet Far East.
  3. For the flight to Cuba the passenger load has been reduced from a maximum of 170 to about 60; in addition, up to 17,000 pounds of freight could be carried depending on the fuel load.